

## Kelleher, Stephanie

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Friday, April 27, 2012 3:20 PM  
**To:** Kelleher, Stephanie  
**Subject:** Comments on Pilot Thompson

Here are my "public comments" on the Pilot Thompson timber sale.

I was told at the last public meeting at the Applegate School that there will be no herbicides used. I sincerely hope this is true.

I'm concerned by a statement in the April letter that refers to cutting hardwoods smaller than 12". We all know the kind of regeneration fuel problems that occur when madrone and live oak are cut. Instead of something with a trunk that can be limbed up, there will be lots of woody, highly flammable sprouts. Because the BLM doesn't have the money or manpower to keep cutting the regeneration back, it seems wisest to leave established madrone and live oak trees alone. I've heard this stated by fire district personnel and BLM folks alike.

I have been managing, on private property, a forest that is being harvested commercially as part of Pilot Thompson, the "Density Management Intermediate Treatment" furthest to the south. The forest I've been thinning extensively for fifteen years is on the same slope and aspect. I also have toured the BLM area in question quite a bit. There's no question that somebody needs to get in there with a saw and do some work.

What concerns me is that there is really very little commercial-quality timber there. There's a tremendous amount of dog-hair and suppressed growth fir, and possibly the 8"-10" trees may be useful commercially, but basically everything that needs to come out for the health of the forest is biomass at best. There are sparse clumps here and there of larger firs, mostly in good health, and these represent the vast bulk of the useful timber. However, they are the only mature firs in the area and nothing else seems like it will be filling this role in the forest for many, many years- maybe a century if the comparatively few 10-12" firs are cut. This area certainly needs to have a lot of trees removed, but the trees that need removed are basically doghair. There are a few decent-sized hardwoods but these are comparatively rare as well.

I could picture this area truly impoverished by cutting the merchantable timber, or I could picture it much improved and primed to grow into a healthy forest again. Opening up the skid roads to drag the few commercially viable trees out is bound to aggravate the regeneration problems that currently exist on these skid roads.

In closing let me state that I am greatly encouraged by the new improved BLM dialogue with the public, especially the neighborhood meetings. I'm also greatly relieved that the poison-the-hardwoods program seems to be history, and that restoring forest diversity is a priority. Nonetheless I am, again, still, deeply concerned that forests that are a mess from repeated extraction of the bigger conifers are facing yet another round of logging.

I've been wading through the mess on my own adjacent property, spending a lot of money, doing a lot of work, and coming up with precious little useful timber. I have my doubts that anything sustainable and ecologically sound is commercially viable in this southernmost "density management intermediate treatment" area.

Thank you,

